

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 01368 261112Z

14

ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 DODE-00 NEA-06 IO-03 NSCE-00

NSC-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 INRE-00 ACDA-10

USIE-00 PRS-01 CCO-00 L-02 AF-04 OMB-01 DRC-01 EUR-10

SSO-00 /077 W

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O 261040Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0681

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 1368

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, OCLR, XX

SUBJECT: CONSTITUTING UN MIDDLE EAST PEACE FORCE

REF: STATE 211310

1. CIRCULAR REFTTEL MAKES REQUEST EMBASSY ALERT HOST GOVT OF POSSIBLE REQUEST FROM USG FOR OVERFLIGHT AND LANDING REQUIREMENTS FOR USAF OPERATING UNDER AUSPICES OF UN.

2. ACTUAL REQUEST, IF SUBSEQUENTLY MADE TO LARG, ALMOST CERTAINLY WOULD BE TURNED DOWN. NOTHING HERE COULD BE MORE PREDICTABLE IN VIEW OF QADHAFI'S STANCE SINCE BEGINNING OF WAR THAT ARABS MADE A MISTAKE IN SEEKING LIMITED OBJECTIVES, HIS FURY AT GREAT POWER INTERVENTION TO HALF WAR (FBIS M221907), HIS DISGUST AT EGYPTIAN ACCEPTANCE OF IT, AND HIS LONG-STANDING CONTEMPT OF UN, REFLECTED AGAIN THIS WEEK IN LOCAL MEDIA COMMENTS. IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY INFURIATING TO HIM TO RECEIVE REQUEST FOR FACILITIES TO USAF, WHETHER OR NOT ACTING IN NAME OF UN. HE WOULD ASSUME THAT USAF
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PAGE 02 TRIPOL 01368 261112Z

ALSO HAD INTELLIGENCE PURPOSES IN SEEKING OVERFLY

LIBYA, OR TO LAND ON LIBYAN TERRITORY. I KNOW OF NO WAY HE COULD BE PERSUADED OTHERWISE, PROBABLY EVEN BY SADAT.

3. GIVEN THIS JUDGMENT, THAT LARG WOULD NOT APPROVE ANY SPECIFIC ASSISTANCE REQUESTED FOR USAF, I URGE PLANNING TAKE THIS FACTOR INTO ACCOUNT. OTHERWISE VALUABLE TIME MIGHT BE LOST IN TRYING TO ARRANGE

SOMETHING THAT WILL NOT WORK.

4. FURTHERMORE, IN VIEW OF THIS JUDGMENT, I QUESTION THE WISDOM OF MAKING APPROACH CALLED FOR BY REFTEL TO LARG. WE HERE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE TAKEN AS POSITIVELY PROVOCATIVE IN CONTEXT OF US/LIBYAN RELATIONS. THE PURELY FORMAL TIE IS NO DOUBT A VERY MARGINAL CONSIDERATION IN WASHINGTON AT THIS TIME, AND WE DO NOT DISPUTE THAT IT SHOULD BE, BUT WE DO POINT OUT THAT ITS VERY EXISTENCE AT THIS TIME MAY BE FORTUITOUS AND VERY FRAGILE. WE HAD ONE LARG-INSPIRED ROCK-THROWING DEMONSTRATION OCTOBER 22 AND THERE IS A REPORT OF ANOTHER PLANNED FOR LATER TODAY. WE TEND TO DISCOUNT THAT REPORT, BUT IT POINTS UP THE DELICACY OF OUR SITUATION HERE. UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, AND CONSIDERING THE OBJECTIVE RECENTLY REAFFIRMED OF MAINTAINING AN OFFICIAL PRESENCE HERE, WE RESPECTFULLY SUGGEST THAT WE NOT BE PRESSED TO MAKE A PURELY CONTINGENCY APPROACH THAT WE KNOW WOULD BE MET WITH CONSTERNATION, ANGER AND, IN ALL PROBABILITY, REJECTION.

5. SHOULD IT BE DETERMINED THE USAF MUST OVERFLY LIBYA AT PARTICULAR TIMES AND PLACES, THAT WOULD BE A DIFFERENT MATTER AND I WOULD, OF COURSE, MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO SECURE CLEARANCE (THOUGH AGAIN THE LARG'S RESPONSE WOULD BE VERY SUSPICIOUS AND NEGATIVE).
JOSIF

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMISTICE, MILITARY AIRLIFTS, MILITARY FLIGHT CLEARANCES, INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: elyme
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TRIPOL01368
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS JOSIF
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TRIPOLI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973108/aaaaafhm.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: STATE 211310
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <23-Jan-2002 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONSTITUTING UN MIDDLE EAST PEACE FORCE
TAGS: MARR, OCLR, US, LY, IS, XF, UNEF, USAF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005